
VOLUNTEER PLANS

Community Resource Coordinator (CRC)s, in concert with county directors, supervisory employees, line staff and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) board members, develop plans for the use of volunteers and community resources in support of county/department goals and objectives. It is recommended that local office plans include specifics for the utilization of these resources.

RECRUITMENT

CRCs promote volunteer opportunities for volunteers with varied interests and abilities (short-term or episodic volunteers, family volunteers, college volunteers/interns, virtual volunteers, youth volunteers and volunteers with disabilities). Volunteer recruitment plans start with a request for volunteers from a staff member or work unit within the agency. Recruitment efforts can take many forms but should be designed to reach potential volunteers who would be best suited to the specific volunteer assignment. The recruitment plan should promote the department and its need for volunteers.

SIGMA REGISTRATION

Volunteers who will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses are required to register as a vendor on the SIGMA accounting computer system. This is accomplished by having the volunteer register online <https://sigma.michigan.gov/webapp/PRDVSS2X1/AltSelfService>. The volunteer will receive notification of their registration including information about how to make changes. CRCs should check with the local accounting office for additional information.

SCREENING APPLICANTS

Screening, background checks and registration are activities the CRC performs in responding to interest from individuals and groups in volunteering for MDHHS. The CRC should verify the identity of potential volunteers by photocopying their driver's license or state identification card. Screening is a process that should be done on a regular schedule with the volunteers throughout their relationship with MDHHS. [Internet Criminal History Access Tool \(ICHAT\)](#) and central registry screens must be done on an annual basis for volunteers working directly with children.

To manage the risks to vulnerable MDHHS clients with whom volunteers may come in contact, it is necessary to examine available records to screen prospective volunteers. The mere presence of negative information need not exclude the applicant from volunteering, but must be carefully evaluated in making the placement.

The type of screening varies, depending on the type of volunteer. Additional screenings are required for volunteers working with children in foster care or pending adoption and therefore need to comply with child placing agency licensing rules; see [R 400.12207](#) and [R 400.12212](#). If issues or concerns arise during the screening process, the CRC should resolve these before accepting and registering the person as a volunteer.

Screening of a potential volunteer begins with their first contact with the department. Potential volunteers complete these registration materials:

- DHS-1181, Volunteer Services Agreement.
- DHS-1181A, Volunteer Services Agreement-Transporters (as appropriate).
- DHS-1182A, Volunteer Registration Record (for on-going volunteers).
- DHS-1182B, Volunteer Registration Record Short-Term Volunteers (for short-term volunteers only).

Episodic and Virtual Volunteers

No screening required if the volunteer(s) do not have unsupervised direct contact with clients. If the volunteer changes status to ongoing volunteer, all required background checks must be completed.

Group Volunteers

No screening required if the volunteer(s) do not have unsupervised direct contact with clients. If the volunteer group is working with vulnerable persons or receives confidential information, it is recommended that the primary contact person be registered as an ongoing volunteer.

Background Checks

The CRC is responsible to conduct appropriate background checks before accepting a potential volunteer. The type of check required varies depending on the anticipated assignment/activities of the potential volunteer.

Note: Information obtained should be discussed with the potential volunteer prior to placement and documented in the volunteer file.

Central Registry

A central registry check is required if the potential volunteer will have unsupervised contact with children. It is strongly recommended that a central registry check be done for all potential volunteers. Central registry indicates whether the potential volunteer has been a perpetrator of child abuse or neglect.

A potential volunteer must request, in person or in writing, a central registry clearance at the local office. To do this, the potential volunteer must complete form DHS-1929, Request for Central Registry Clearance, and present the form to local office staff. Identification is required.

The volunteer has three options for receiving results of a central registry clearance:

- Mailed directly to them.
- Picked up at local office.
- Results released directly to volunteer agency.

However, if the potential volunteer is listed on central registry, the results will only be mailed directly to the volunteer.

Note: Consult the children's protective services supervisor for additional information about the appropriateness of the potential volunteer; see Children's Protective Services (PSM) manual, Item 713-13, Child Abuse and Neglect Central registry (CA/NCR).

Public Sex Offender Registry (PSOR)

The sexual offender's list should be consulted in each potential volunteer's reference checks.

1. From the Michigan State Policy public website select **Services/Sex Offender Registry**.
2. Click [Search the Michigan Sex Offender Registry](#).
3. Enter code and click **I have read the disclaimer and agree to the terms**.
4. Enter the potential volunteer's name in the offender information and click **Search**.

Note: From the MDHHS intranet Toolbox select Quick Information Links to External Web sites/Criminal Information and Tracking/PSOR - Public Sex Offender Registry (State Policy).

Bridges Clearance

If a volunteer's assignment is in a MDHHS office then a Bridges clearance is required to determine whether the potential volunteer is a client of the department. CRCs may conduct the clearance in Bridges.

Bridges will display a list of potential matches based on the search criteria entered. If a potential volunteer's name appears in the list of the potential matches, verify their identity by matching the social security number and date of birth.

Bridges will list the current case status as approved, application denied, or closed. If the potential volunteer's name does not appear in the search results or if the case status shows application denied or closed the potential volunteer is not a client of the department.

If the case status reads approved, the potential volunteer is a client of the department. If the potential volunteer is a client and is accepted as a volunteer in the office, the CRC must notify the caseworker and the unit manager so that the volunteer does not have unsupervised access to his/her own case record. It is advisable to talk with the caseworker about the potential volunteer as part of the screening process. It is also suggested that the CRC have a discussion with the volunteer about appropriate access to their caseworker, especially if the volunteer is working in the same building.

Driver's License Record

Driver's license record checks are required if the potential volunteer will be transporting clients or driving a state car. Information can be obtained through local office Secretary of State (SOS) coordinator or at [Inside Michigan/Toolbox/Technology/ DHS Information Security/ SOS: BIS-23 Access Form 10/2015](#). CRCs **must** see [SOS - 05/25/2017](#) for detailed instructions on gaining access to SOS. When filling out the reason for requested access rights box on the form explain that access is needed to screen the driving records of prospective volunteer transporters.

In some counties, CRCs can obtain this information through their local law enforcement department. The Driver Responsibility Program imposes monetary sanctions on drivers with 7 or more points on their record. There are two categories of offenses: examples of category 1 offenses include speeding, improper turns and following too closely; examples of category 2 offenses include drunk driving, reckless driving, driving with no proof of insurance, driving with expired license. Category 2 offenses are classified as qualifying offenses and carry their own driving responsibility fee independent from the number of points on the driving record. CRCs should carefully examine the driving record of a volunteer transporter with 7 or more points on his/her record. Err on the side of caution and safety when determining if the volunteer transporter with 7 or more points on their record should be allowed to continue transporting MDHHS clients. Volunteer drivers with category 2 offenses should not be allowed to transport MDHHS clients.

Volunteer Driver Agreement

The DHS-1181A, DHS Registered Volunteer Driver Agreement, signed and dated, is required for each transporter's file and must be updated annually.

References

Obtaining references for all potential volunteers is recommended. Three references are required for potential volunteers who will have unsupervised contact with children. Obtain reference checks by letter, telephone, or in-person. References that are received verbally must be documented with notes and dates of contacts; see DHS-1179, Volunteer Services Reference.

Note: The DHS-223, Documentation Record, in Word may be used for documentation purposes.

Criminal History ICHAT

A criminal history check is strongly recommended for all potential volunteers including court-ordered community services volunteers, but is required if the potential volunteer will have unsupervised contact with children. This information can be obtained through the [Internet Criminal History Access Tool \(ICHAT\)](#). Each office has an ICHAT coordinator who is responsible for assigning the authorized users in that office. New CRCs should contact that person to be added as an authorized user. The ICHAT coordinator is responsible for training the new user about the responsibilities associated with use of this tool. Consult with your immediate supervisor on questionable criminal histories as to the appropriateness of the potential volunteer. See the policies and procedures for accessing and using information received from ICHAT in CRM-402.

Proof of Vehicle Insurance and Vehicle Registration

Proof of vehicle insurance and vehicle registration is required for all potential volunteers who will be using their personal vehicles to transport clients. A privately-owned vehicle used by a volunteer in transporting clients **must be insured at all times**, in accordance with Act. No. 294, PA 1972.

This state law requires a minimum liability insurance coverage of:

- \$20,000 for each person.
- \$40,000 for bodily injury for each accident.
- As well as \$10,000 for property damage liability for each accident.

The state has a blanket insurance policy that takes over after these amounts and augments coverage for a total of \$500,000 for residual bodily injury liability for each person and \$1,000,000 for each accident. The property damage liability in excess of the volunteer's insurance policy would amount to a total of \$100,000 for each accident.

REGISTRATION

On-going Volunteers

A DHS-1182A, Volunteer Registration Record, and a DHS-1181, Volunteer Services Agreement, must be reviewed and signed by the volunteer as a condition of becoming a volunteer with MDHHS; see [MDHHS Forms Library](#). Information that must be included in the personnel file of an ongoing volunteer is found in CRM-105, **ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS, VOLUNTEER RECORDS** section under the subsection, Individual Volunteer File.

Episodic Volunteers

Episodic volunteers complete the DHS-1182B, Short-Term Registration form; [MDHHS Forms Library](#).

Episodic volunteers are:

- Also considered short-term volunteers. They are individuals who do one-time only or short duration volunteer jobs. Often these volunteers will assist with events, special projects, or activities that last less than 25 hours per calendar year; such as fundraising events or holiday adopt-a-family program.
- **Not** approved for placement that involves direct client contact.
- **Not** reimbursed for expenses.

Registration of a short-term or episodic volunteer includes:

- Address.
- Completion of the confidentiality agreement DHS-1181, Volunteer Services Agreement.
- Date of birth.
- Person to contact in case of emergency.
- Phone.
- Registration of name.

An episodic volunteer:

- Follows the practices and policies undertaken by all MDHHS volunteers.
- Receives an orientation to their volunteer assignment.
- Reports hours of service.

Virtual Volunteers

A virtual volunteer is an individual who completes tasks in whole or in part via the Internet using a home or work computer. Examples include: conducting online research for funding opportunities or gathering agency information for a community resources directory.

Register virtual volunteers as episodic volunteers even if their volunteer activity is ongoing.

Group Volunteers

Registration information that must be included in the volunteer group's file includes:

- A group registration with the name, address, and telephone number of the group leader.
- A list of all group members.

The group leader must sign a confidentiality agreement, DHS-1181, Volunteer Services Agreement, which includes a statement that the group leader will train participating members of his/her group on MDHHS confidentiality issues.

The group leader agrees to complete a monthly report that includes the number of hours of service provided by the group, the number of client services provided, and a list of the group's volunteers. The CRC will be responsible for reporting this information on the monthly Community Resource Program report.

Interviews

An in-person interview is highly recommended with all potential volunteers; it is considered critical for determining the volunteer's proper placement. An interview is required if the potential volunteer is expected to come in direct contact with children; see CRM-403, INTERVIEW GUIDELINES.

ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

The CRC provides or arranges for a general orientation session for every new volunteer which includes the following topics:

- Advising the volunteer of the responsibility to report any changes that may affect his/her ability to volunteer within ten days. Examples of changes to report may include:
 - Changes in criminal or child protective service status.
 - Changes in employment or MDHHS recipient status.
 - Changes in health or physical limitations.
 - Loss of valid driver's license or vehicle insurance.
 - Vehicle accidents or moving violations.
 - Vehicle registration changes.
 - Changes in contact information.
- Department confidentiality requirements.
- Department overview, including information on department programs and services.
- Local office policies and procedures.
- Procedures for reimbursement of out of pocket expenses and for maintaining SIGMA registration.
- Reporting of time and activities.
- Volunteers may attend trainings, conferences, and local office procedure updates, as appropriate. Volunteers are consulted on the type of training they need. They are provided program-specific training in such areas as mentoring, transportation, and parent aides, as needed.

Volunteer Position Description

Volunteers are provided a position description for their review prior to accepting an assignment. Volunteer position descriptions include:

- Date that the position description was written or last modified.
- Duties to be performed.
- Minimum qualifications.
- Name of the volunteer's supervisor and contact information.

- Time commitment.
- Title.
- Training requirements.

Note: The volunteer position description **cannot** include activities that supplant bargaining unit work.

PLACEMENT AND SUPERVISION

The placement process must consider the volunteer's status on; Central Registry, Bridges, criminal histories, Public Sex Offender Registry (PSOR), questionable references and Secretary of State inquiry results.

Special accommodation requirements as related to the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) should be considered in determining appropriate placement; see the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Website [Inside MDHHS/Legal/Equal Opportunity](#).

The CRC and staff requesting the volunteer or service determine placement of volunteers unless they are placed with an outside agency.

Unless agreed upon prior to the placement of a volunteer, the staff requesting the service will be responsible for training and day-to-day supervision of the volunteer.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

It is the role of every supervisor and community resource coordinator to monitor the performance of each assigned volunteer on a continual basis. Formal yearly performance evaluations, while mandatory only under child welfare licensing requirements, offer the opportunity to encourage and to praise the services and accomplishments of each volunteer.

MDHHS and the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing requires all volunteers who have direct contact with children who are in foster care or are on independent living status must receive initial and annual performance evaluations; see DHS-1178, Volunteer Evaluation.

Performance evaluations are to be completed by the individual directly responsible for the supervision of the volunteer.

CHILDREN AND ADULT LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

If a performance evaluation is required under Children and Adult Licensing requirements the following information must be included:

- [MCL 722.113e Criminal history check required; posting notice; rules.](#)
- [MCL 722.119\(2\)\(3\)\(4\) Section 9.](#)
- [Provisions from Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing Child Placing Agencies.](#)

Performance evaluations are **not** required under child welfare licensing for volunteers who have direct contact with adult foster care clients or other vulnerable adults' rules.

PLACEMENT WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES

To assist community agencies to better serve MDHHS clients, the MDHHS Community Resource Program (CRP) may request a CM-0570, Memorandum of Understanding, with an outside agency to place volunteers within that agency. Placement of MDHHS volunteers with outside agencies is to be limited to nonprofit or governmental entities.

Memorandum of Understanding

The DHS-635, Memorandum of Understanding must be completed prior to volunteer placement. The agreement:

- Must be signed by a representative of the outside agency and the MDHHS grants division director, Bureau of Grants and Purchasing, or designee.
- May only be for one fiscal year at a time, but may be renewed annually.
- May be terminated by MDHHS immediately if it is no longer in the best interest of MDHHS or if funding becomes unavailable.

The outside agency must certify that:

- Most clients served by the volunteers are MDHHS clients.

- A volunteer service description will be provided to MDHHS prior to placement.
- The outside agency provides training and on-site supervision of the volunteer.
- The outside agency is responsible for all liability issues affecting MDHHS volunteers during placement.
- The outside agency will comply with all state and federal laws.

Reimbursement Guidelines

Total reimbursements to volunteers for all outside agency agreements must be considered along with other CRP expenses and stay within the county's community resource annual allocation. Agencies are not reimbursed directly. All reimbursement is paid to the volunteers using standardized volunteer reimbursement procedures. Individuals receiving reimbursement must be registered and oriented as a MDHHS volunteer.

To be reimbursed for allowable expenses MDHHS volunteers placed within an outside agency must complete:

- A DHS-1582-TV-NSE, Travel Voucher for Non-State Employees.
- The DHS-4687, Volunteer Services Travel Log/Hours Report; see [MDHHS Forms Library](#) for additional form information.
- Local office form.

Note: The outside agency must certify the accuracy of each DHS-4687 and DHS-1582-TV-NSE.

Volunteers placed with outside agencies are reimbursed for mileage and allowable meals based on MDHHS travel regulations. Both reports are submitted monthly.

Recognition

Volunteers placed with outside agencies may be included in any MDHHS training and recognition events that are held for volunteers working within MDHHS.

Government Immunity/Outside Agency Volunteers

Volunteers do **not** have governmental immunity if they are placed at a nonprofit agency. Volunteers are protected from liability under Public Law 105-19: The Volunteer Protection Act of 1997.

PRIVATE NONPROFIT BOARDS

MDHHS supports the expansion of collaborative efforts. Local office participation is an important part of these collaborative efforts. Registered **volunteers** may participate on local boards if participation is determined to be in the interest of the agency. Board participation should only be granted if the following conditions are met:

- Specific board participation is identified, in writing, as one of the volunteer's duties.
- **Volunteers** represent only MDHHS interests on the board. Any other type of participation (such as fund-raisers, picnics, etc.) *may* jeopardize the volunteer's governmental immunity.

Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest, or the appearance of conflict of interest, must be avoided. **Volunteers** may **not** participate in:

- Fixing rates.
- Granting subsidies.
- Issuance permits or certificates.
- Making loans.
- Negotiating or executing contracts.
- Other regulation or supervision relating to a business entity in which the public officer or employee has a financial or personal interest.

If a **volunteer** assigned to participate on a board believes that there may be a conflict of interest, they must disclose any financial interest in the contract to the official body that has power to approve the contract. This disclosure shall be made a matter of the official body's minutes.

GOVERNMENTAL IMMUNITY/ VOLUNTEERS

As with any activity performed by a MDHHS representative, MDHHS volunteers may be sued. Litigation is a risk associated with any volunteer function. Generally, governmental immunity may be afforded to a MDHHS volunteer who is:

- Engaged in an exercise or discharge of a governmental function, specifically doing MDHHS work.
- Acting in the scope of his or her authority.
- Engaged in conduct that does not amount to gross negligence. Whether an individual's conduct has risen to the level of gross negligence cannot be answered in advance, but would depend upon the facts and nuances of a case.

RECOGNITION

Recognition items and/or events may be funded once per year from the local county community resource allocation. Events, including meals for volunteers, staff directly involved with the volunteer program, and other honorees are allowable expenditures. The cost of a meal per participant must **not** exceed **current state group rates**. See Annual Community Resource Allocation FOA Memo, [APA-230, Travel and Employee Expense Reimbursement](#), or [DTMB Travel Rates](#) for current spending guidelines.

Volunteers may receive certificates and milestone-hours pins purchased through the local community resource allocation. Certificates or gift cards can be used to recognize volunteers and donors.

PROBLEM SITUATIONS

If a problem arises with the performance of a volunteer, the supervisor and/or CRC make an assessment and implement a performance improvement plan with the volunteer. Additional training and or reassignment often solve volunteer service problems. If warranted, the CRC may require the volunteer to resign or retire from service at MDHHS.

Immediate Dismissal

Immediate dismissal may be warranted for:

- Use of alcohol or illegal substances while on assignment.
- Any breach of confidentiality.
- Falsification of records.
- A criminal conviction.
- Threats and/or acts of violence directed toward a client or staff.

Note: The CRC or other designated person should retrieve the volunteer's ID card, keys and/or any other MDHHS property.

Informal Complaints

CRCs may receive informal complaints about a volunteer's behavior and/or performance. The CRC should review and resolve any issues except those complaints involving child abuse/neglect, adult abuse/exploitation or welfare fraud/theft **which** require coordination with appropriate management staff.

Complaint Investigation

CRCs are responsible for overseeing complaint investigations involving volunteers. Complaints may necessitate a referral outside of the local office to secure an investigation (such as law enforcement or Social Security). The MDHHS Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Programs is responsible for investigating allegations of discrimination and sexual harassment. This does not prevent the complainant from filing a complaint with state or federal civil rights agencies; see Michigan Department of Health and Human Services website [Inside MDHHS/Legal/Equal Opportunity](#) for more information.

Note: The CRC may temporarily reassign or suspend a volunteer pending the completion of an investigation.

SAFETY

Practices to protect the safety of MDHHS staff extend to volunteers. The following practices may be appropriate for volunteers providing services outside of MDHHS offices, such as home calls and providing transportation.

Volunteers may be:

- Assigned in pairs or paired with MDHHS staff.
- Asked to provide an itinerary.
- Provided cellular telephones.
- Asked to phone a designated contact at the local MDHHS office.
- Allowed use of state cars which have been equipped with safety features.
- Provided safety training.

Zero Tolerance

The agency's zero tolerance standards for actual or threatened violence in the work place applies to volunteers as it does to classified employees. Volunteers are provided with access to the local office rapid response team as appropriate. Volunteers should be informed at orientation that if they feel threatened, they have a duty to withdraw from the situation; see [APR-471, Employee Safety](#), for further information.

INJURY

Injury of a Volunteer

The procedures listed below must be followed in the event of a volunteer service-related injury:

- Encourage the volunteer to seek medical attention and arrange for transportation, if necessary.
- Complete an incident report, on Inside Michigan/Human Resources/Incident Report.
- Notify the local office director and local personnel office of the volunteer's injury.
- Notify MDHHS Human Resources Disability Management Unit of the injury at 517-335-6341.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION

If a volunteer is injured while providing volunteer services for MDHHS, the agency may or may not be liable for the injury. Each instance is evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

MDHHS may or may not be liable if a MDHHS client is injured while being transported by a MDHHS volunteer. If a client is injured, see [EHP-403, Lawsuits, Litigation, Legal Documents and Forms](#), for the procedures to be followed in responding to an injury.

The Michigan Supreme Court confirmed that volunteers are not employees. It is misleading to tell volunteers that worker's compensation covers them. There are many legal decisions which have ruled on coverage of employees and volunteers. There are legal tests to determine whether the duties would be under worker's compensation coverage. Each situation is considered on a case-by-case basis.

If a volunteer files a worker's compensation claim, MDHHS indicates to the Citizens Management Inc., MDHHS' third party administrator, whether the agency supports the claim.